

[25 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

Schemes and projects for employment of rural youth

4364. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the various schemes and projects initiated by Government to ensure employment for rural youth and professionals of Andhra Pradesh during the last five years; and

(b) The number of people benefited by these schemes upto now?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) and (b) The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans (SITRA), were the self employment Programmes for the rural poor which could also benefit rural youth and professionals, if they belonged to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. From April 1999 a new self employment Programme namely the Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) was started by restructuring the earlier schemes. The Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) is a holistic Programme covering all aspects of self employment such as organization of the poor into Self Help groups, Training, Credit, Technology, Infrastructure and Marketing. The rural youth and professionals who are from the BPL families can also be covered under this scheme. No scheme has been initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development specifically to ensure employment for rural youth and professionals either in Andhra Pradesh or in any other State of this country.

Scarcity of drinking water in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh

4365. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item titled "Lack of Water Policy Haunts Gujarat"

appearing in the Hindustan Times, New Delhi, dated 10th January, 2001;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh are again facing drought and there is scarcity of potable drinking water in villages;

(d) if so, whether Government has launched any programme for providing of drinking water to the affected areas and providing of financial assistance to the State Governments on account of drought; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Government has taken note of the news item. The State Government of Gujarat has reported that steps to formulate "Gujarat State Water Policy" have since been initiated.

(c) As reported by the State Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, these States are facing drought situation during the current year also and there is scarcity of potable water in some areas of these States.

(d) and (e) As reported by the Government of Madhya Pradesh, an Action Plan amounting to Rs. 71.59 crores to provide drinking water in scarcity affected areas of Madhya Pradesh for the period from April to June, 2001 has been prepared by the State Government and is under implementation. Under the Action Plan, installation of new handpumps, repair of non-functional handpumps, hydro-fracturing, creation of new sources, rejuvenation of non-functional rural water supply schemes, transportation of water, etc. have been proposed.

Similarly, the State Government of Gujarat has reported that an Action Plan at the cost of Rs. 392.00 crores has been prepared to tackle the scarcity of drinking water and series of actions to provide drinking water in the affected areas have already been taken. These include pumping of water from Sardar Sarovar reservoir, collection of water in the Pancj tank in Kheda district through Narmada Canals

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and Mahi Canals, and pumping of water from Panej tank into transmission mains to supply water to parts of the affected areas. Emergency pumping of water supply from Narmada River to supply water to some parts of the affected areas is also reported to be under progress. In addition, short term measures to supply water by installing hand pumps, construction of tube wells, replacement of pumping machinery and through water tankers have also been taken up by the State Government in affected areas.

Rural Drinking Water is a State subject. Government of India supplements the efforts of the States by providing financial assistance under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY)—Rural Drinking Water. Powers to plan, sanction and implement schemes/projects under these programmes have been delegated to States. During the year 2000-2001, for rural drinking water supply, under ARWSP, a sum of Rs. 95.29 crores and under PMGY—Rural Drinking Water, a sum of Rs. 18.04 crores has been released to Madhya Pradesh.

In case of Gujarat, the entire allocation of Rs. 74.85 crores for the year 2000-2001 under ARWSP has been released to the State Government. Further, in the wake of drought/earthquake, an additional sum of Rs. 100.00 crores has also been released to Gujarat for providing drinking water in the rural areas of the State. Under Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojana—Rural Drinking Water, a sum of Rs. 25.91 crores have been released to Government of Gujarat during the year 2000-2001.

Further, to facilitate the mitigation efforts, in view of the prevailing scarcity of drinking water in rural areas of these States on account of drought, the priorities fixed in the ARWSP guidelines has been relaxed by the Government of India to the extent that the funds under ARWSP and PMGY—Rural Drinking Water could also be utilised for activities relating to repair, rejuvenation, renovation, restoration and replacement of existing rural drinking water schemes in areas affected by scarcity of drinking water in the State.